A LETTER

TO THE

Court of Directors

OF THE

EAST-INDIA COMPANY

FROM

WARREN HASTINGS, Esq.

Governor-General of Bengal.

Dated, Fort-William, March 20, 1783.

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

THE following LETTER was read on the 23d inſtant at a General Court of Proprietors. The gentlemen who were preſent wiſhed it might be publiſhed; to which there can be no objection, becauſe a copy if it lies at the India-Houſe for every body to peruſe. For the better underſtanding the Letter, it has been thought proper to print, from the Reports of the Select Committee, ſuch parts of the Company's General Letter as are alluded to by Mr. Haſtings.

London,
September 27, 1783.

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EXTRACTS

FROM THE

General Letter to Bengal,

Dated the 28th of Auguſt, 1782.

YOUR proceedings, reſpecting Mr. Francis Fowke, are really ſurpriſing to us. Mr. Fowke's firſt appointment, to be Reſident at Benaris, was in Auguſt, 1775. He was recalled from thence in Auguſt, 1776, and Mr. Graham appointed to ſucceed him. —

Our orders, however of the 30th of January, 1778, were positive for his restoration; but they were rendered ineffectual by your resolution, in July, 1778, to suspend the execution of them. In May, 1779, we repeated the orders respecting Mr. Fowke; and, in consequence thereof, Mr. Fowke was again appointed to proceed to Benaris. But judge of our astonishment, to find that, in January, 1781, in contempt of our authority, Mr. Fowke was once more removed from his station at Benaris. So far from a charge having been brought against him, on which ground alone his removal could be justified, we find his conduct approved and his character esteemed; and, in lieu of the station from which he is thus removed, another positive order of the Company was broken through, by his being appointed agent for the provision of boats to be employed for the military service of your establishment, with a commission of 15 per cent. upon his disbursements, and an allowance given him of rupees, 1000 per month, until the expiration of the then-subsisting contract.

Without

Without pretending to disapprove of the conduct of Mr. Markham, who was appointed to succeed Mr. Fowke at Benaris, but merely to vindicate the authority of the Court of Directors, we hereby direct, that Mr. Fowke do immediately resume his station at Benaris. As to the boat-agency, that appointment must be immediately annulled, and the business performed by contract, in the manner repeatedly laid down for your guidance.

Equally extraordinary and unwarrantable have been your proceedings respecting Mr. John Bristow. He was appointed Resident at Owde, in December, 1774. In December, 1776, he was recalled, without the shadow of a charge being exhibited against him. By our letter, of the 4th of July, 1777, we signified our disapprobation of the proceedings against Mr. Bristow, and directed that he should be restored to his station, which direction we confirmed by our subsequent letter of the 23d of December,

1787.

1778. Mr. Briſtow arrived in India in February, 1780; and, in October in the ſame year, i was reſolved, by your Board, that Mr. Briſtow ſhould return to Owde, but that his appointment ſhould be limited ſolely to the conduct of political negotiations, Mr. Middleton being, at the ſame time, nominated to ſettle pecuniary matters with the Vizier. On the 21ſt of May, 1781, upon receiving a letter from the Vizier, expreſſing a deſire that Mr. Briſtow ſhould be removed from his court, he was again recalled. But, without entering into the conſideration of this matter, and in order to vindicate our authority, — We do hereby poſitively direct, that Mr. Briſtow do forthwith proceed to Owde, in the ſtation of our Reſident there. We do not mean in the leaſt to reflect on the character and ability of Mr. Middleton, who muſt be immediately recalled from thence; but it is a duty incumbent on us thus to maintain the reſpect due to the orders of the Court of Directors. You are likewiſe to obſerve, that we ſhall not ſuffer any other perſon to proceed to Owde for the management of the finance; one perſon being, in our opinion, ſufficient to tranſact our buſineſs there, as principal in both

departments;

departments; and we expect our orders, respecting the succession to that Residency, to be fully complied with.

The proceedings of your government, respecting Rajah Cheit Sing, have been, for some time, under our serious consideration. Our enquiry commenced with the death of Sujah Dowlah, in 1775; when the Governor-general and Council concluded a treaty with his successor, by which the Zemeendarry of Benaris, with its dependencies, was surrendered, in perpetuity, to the Company.

Previous to the conclusion of the before-mentioned treaty, we find that, on the 13th of February, 1775, the Governor-general proposed, that each member of the Board should deliver in his sentiments of the conditions to be required or acceded to for the new treaty. This was accordingly done; and, on the opinions then delivered, the Governor-general proposed, that the perpetual and independent possession of

the Zemeendarry of Benaris, and its dependencies, be confirmed and guaranteed to Rajah Cheit Sing and his heirs for ever; ſubject only to the annual payment of the revenue hitherto paid to the late Vizier, amounting to Benaris Sicca rupees 23,71,656 12; that no other demand be made upon him, either by the Nabob of Owde or your government; nor any kind of authority or juriſdiction exerciſed by either within the dominions aſſigned him. The Governor-general's obſervations on this propoſition are as follow: "The Rajah of Benaris, from "the ſituation of his country, which is a frontier "both to the provinces of Owde and Bahar, "may be made a ſerviceable ally to the Company, whenever their affairs ſhall require it. "He has always been conſidered in this light, "both by the Company and the ſucceſſive "members of the late Council; but, to enſure "his attachment to the Company, his intereſt "muſt be connected with it, which cannot be "better effected than by freeing him totally "from the remains of his preſent vaſſalage under the guarantee and protection of the Company, and, at the ſame time, guarding him "againſt any apprehenſions from this govern-

"ment,

" ment, by thus pledging its faith that no " encroachments ſhall be made on his rights by " the Company."

On the 3d of March, the Board reſume the conſideration of the buſineſs, and the Governor-general propoſes the following queſtions: —— " Whether it ſhall be made a condition of the " new treaty, that Rajah Cheit Sing ſhall exer- " ciſe a free and independent authority in his " own dominions, ſubject only to the payment " of his tribute?"

This queſtion was reſolved in the affirmative.

Every preliminary being ſettled with the Vizier, and the treaty executed, the Governor-general, on the 12th of June, 1775, laid before the Board a minute, with obſervations, reſpecting the arrangements to be made with Rajah Cheit Sing, in which he declares his readineſs to acquieſce in any plan which may be propoſed, on terms by which more effectual proviſion may be made for the intereſt of the Com-

pany, without an encroachment on the juſt rights of the Rajah or the engagements actually ſubſiſting with him. He propoſes, that Cheit Sing ſhall pay to the Company, in equal monthly payments, the yearly revenue of 22,48,449 Sonaut rupees; that he ſhall be empowered to exerciſe a complete and uncontrouled authority over his Zemeendarry, under the acknowledged ſovereignty of the Company; that he ſhall maintain, in conſtant pay, a body of 2000 horſe, for the ſervice of the Company, whenever they ſhall be required; and that, while the Rajah ſhall continue faithful to theſe engagements and punctual in his payments, and ſhall pay due obedience to the authority of your government, no more demands ſhall be made upon him, by the Company, of any kind; nor, on any pretence whatſoever, ſhall any perſons be allowed to interfere with his authority, or to diſturb the peace of his country. At the concluſion of this Minute, the Governor-general obſerves, "That voluntary reſtraint, made by "the government on its own actions, will af-"ford the Rajah the greateſt confidence; and "naturally inſpire him with ſentiments of fide-"lity and attachment, both from the principles "of

" of gratitude and ſelf-intereſt. Without ſome " ſuch appearance, he will expect, with every " change of government, additional demands " to be made upon him; and will, of courſe, " deſcend to all the arts of intrigue and con- " cealment practiſed by other dependent Rajahs, " which will keep him indigent and weak, and " eventually prove hurtful to the Company. " By proper encouragement and protection, he " may prove a profitable dependent, an uſeful " barrier, and even a powerful ally, to the " Company; but he will be neither, if the " conditions of his connection with the Com- " pany, are left open to future variations." — On the 5th of July, the Board agree with the Governor-general, except in the article to *oblige* Rajah Cheit Sing to keep up a body of 2000 horſe. They reſolved, indeed, to recommend the ſame to him; but declare there ſhall be no obligation on him to do it; the Governor-general at the ſame time obſerving, that it was far from his intention to propoſe this or any other article to be impoſed on the Rajah by compulſion.

We

We are much ſurpriſed at the conduct of the Governor-general towards the Rajah on his arrival at Benaris, when we obſerve that, by the inſtructions he received for his guidance, previous to his departure from Calcutta, the arrangements he was to make with Cheit Sing *were to be conſonant to the mutual relation and actual engagements ſubſiſting between the Company and him.*

The impriſonment of his perſon in the midſt of his country, which, for time immemorial, has been the reſidence of the moſt reſpectable perſons of Hindoſtan, thereby diſgracing him in the eyes of his ſubjects and others, was unwarrantable and highly impolitic, and may tend to weaken the confidence which the native princes of India ought to have in the juſtice and moderation of the Company's government.

The

The resolutions of the Court of Directors, on your proceedings relative to Cheit Sing, are as follow:

" That it appears to this Court, that, on the " death of Sujah Dowlah, 1775, a treaty " was made by his successor, by which " the Zemeendarry of Benaris, and its " dependencies, was ceded in perpetuity to " the Company.

" That it appears to this Court, that Rajah " Cheit Sing was confirmed, by the Go- " vernor-general and Council of Bengal, " in the management of the said Zemeen- " darry, (subject to the sovereignty of " the Company,) on his paying a certain " tribute to the Company, which was " settled at Sicca rupees 22,66,180; and " that the Bengal government pledged it- " self that the free and uncontrouled pos- " session of the Zemeendarry of Benaris and " its dependencies should be confirmed and " guaranteed to the Rajah, and his heirs, for " ever, subject to such tribute; and that no " other demand should be made upon

" him,

" him, nor any kind of authority or juris-
" diction exercised within the dominions
" assigned him, so long as he adhered to
" the terms of his engagements.

" That it appears to this Court, that the
" Governor-general and Council did, on
" the 5th of July, 1775, recommend to
" Rajah Cheit Sing to keep up a body of
" 2000 horse; but at the same time de-
" clared, there should be no obligation on
" him to do it.

" That it appears to this Court, that Rajah
" Cheit Sing performed his engagements
" with the Company, in the regular pay-
" ment of his tribute of Sicca rupees
" 22,66,180.

" That it appears to this Court, that the
" conduct of the Governor-general to-
" wards the Rajah, whilst he was at Be-
" naris, was improper; and that the im-
" prisonment of his person, thereby dis-
" gracing him in the eyes of his subjects
" and others, was unwarrantable and
" highly impolitic, and may tend to
" weaken the confidence which the native
" princes of India ought to have in the

" justice

" juſtice and moderation of the Compa-
" ny's government."

Such farther reſolutions, as we may think proper to come to on this very important ſubject, will be communicated to you by a future conveyance; but we cannot avoid remarking, that, by the Governor-general's laſt Narrative, the real object of his journey to Benaris was to exact from Cheit Sing 40 or 50 lacks of rupees, or to remove him from his Zemeendarry, as appears by a confidential converſation, which paſſed between the Governor-general and Mr. Wheler (as ſtated in the Narrative) previous to the Governor-general's departure.

N. B. The letter, from which the foregoing extracts were taken, was ſigned by the two Chairs and eleven Directors.

"justice and moderation of the Company's government."

Such farther resolutions, as we may think proper to come to on this very important subject, will be communicated to you by a future conveyance; but we cannot avoid remarking, that, by the Governor-general's last Narrative, the real object of his journey to Benares, was to exact from Cheit Sing 40 or 50 lacks of rupees, or to remove him from his Zemindarry, it appears by a confidential conversation, which passed between the Governor-general and Mr. Wheler (as stated in the Narrative) previous to the Governor-general's departure.

N. B. The letter, from which the foregoing extracts were taken, was signed by the two Chairs and eleven Directors.

TO THE HONOURABLE

COURT of DIRECTORS

OF THE HONOURABLE

United EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

FORT-WILLIAM, 20th March, 1783.

Honourable Sirs,

IN your letter to the Governor-general and Council, dated the 28th of Auguſt, 1782, you have been pleaſed to enter into a large diſcuſſion of my proceedings at Benaris, and to appriſe the Board of certain reſolutions, comprehending your judgement upon them. Theſe reſolutions, as the immediate cauſe and ſubject of my preſent addreſs, I ſhall, to avoid the perplexity of frequent and remote reference, hereto ſubjoin:

" That it appears to this Court, that, on
" the death of Sujah Dowlah, 1775, a
" treaty was made with his ſucceſſor, by
" which the Zemeendarry of Benaris, with
" its dependencies, was ceded in perpe-
" tuity to the Eaſt-India Company.

" That it appears to this Court, that Rajah
" Cheyt Sing was confirmed by the Go-
" vernor-general and the Council of Ben-
" gal in the management of the ſaid Ze-
" mindarry, (ſubject to the ſovereignty of
" the Company,) on his paying a certain
" tribute, which was ſettled at Sicca ru-
" pees 22,66,180; and that the Bengal
" Government pledged itſelf, that the free
" and uncontrouled poſſeſſion of the Ze-
" mindarry of Benaris, and its dependen-
" cies, ſhould be confirmed and guaran-
" teed to the Rajah and his heirs for ever,
" ſubject to ſuch tribute; and that no o-
" ther demand ſhould be made upon him,
" nor any kind of authority or juriſdiction
" exerciſed within the dominions aſſigned
" him, ſo long as he adhered to the terms
" of his engagements.

" That

" That it appears to this Court, that the " Governor-general and Council did, on " the 5th of July, 1775, recommend to " Rajah Cheyt Sing to keep up a body of " 2000 horſe; but at the ſame time de- " clared there ſhould be no obligation on " him to do it,

" That it appears to this Court, that Rajah " Cheyt Sing performed his engagements " with the Company, in the regular pay- " ment of his tribute of Sicca rupees " 22,66,180.

" That it appears to this Court, that the " conduct of the Governor-general to- " wards the Rajah whilſt he was at Be- " naris was improper, and that the im- " priſonment of his perſon, thereby diſ- " gracing him in the eyes of his ſubjects " and others, was unwarrantable and high- " ly impolitic, and may tend to weaken " the confidence which the native princes " of India ought to have in the juſtice " and moderation of the Company's go- " vernment."

I underſtand that theſe reſolutions were either publiſhed or intended for publication. As they have proceeded from an authority ſo reſpect- able,

able, every reader of them will naturally and without hesitation believe, that the facts, on which they necessarily and indispensably depend, have been fully established. And who are the readers? not the proprietors alone, whose interest is immediately concerned in them, and whose approbation I am impelled, by every motive of pride and gratitude, to solicit; but the whole body of the people of England, whose passions have been excited on the general subject of the conduct of their servants in India; and before them I am arraigned and prejudged of a violation of the national faith in acts of such complicated aggravation, that, if they were true, no punishment, short of death, could atone for the injury which the interest and credit of the public had sustained in them.

I hope, therefore, I shall not be thought to give unnecessary trouble in calling your attention to a subject not wholly personal, nor to fail in the respect, in which I have never yet failed, to your Honourable Court, in the mode of my vindication, which will not admit of the common delicacies of expression; for I cannot admit facts, however affirmed, which I know to have no existence, and by which my charac-

ter

ter has been blasted; nor will a simple denial or refutation of them be suffitient against such a charge, if I can at the same time appeal to your own knowledge, proved by the evidence of your own arguments, and to what your Honourable Court possesses of candour for my first justification and acquittal.

The facts affirmed, or expressed in terms equal to affirmation, in your resolutions, are as follow: —

I. That the Bengal Government pledged itself, that the free and uncontrouled possession of the Zemindarry of Benaris, and its dependencies, should be confirmed and guaranteed to the Rajah and his heirs for ever.

II. That it pledged itself that no other demand should be made upon him, nor any kind of authority or jurisdiction exercised within his dominions assigned him, so long as he adhered to the terms of his engagements.

III. That the Governor-general required him to keep up a body of 2000 horse, contrary to the declaration made to him by the Governor-general and Council on the 5th of July, 1775, that

that there ſhould be no obligation on him to do it.

IV. That Rajah Cheyt Sing was bound by no other engagements to the Company than for the payment of his tribute of Sicca rupees 22,66,180.

V. That Rajah Cheyt Sing was a native prince of India.

The judgement paſſed on my conduct, as deducible from theſe facts, is, that it was "improper, unwarrantable, and highly impolitic, and may tend to weaken the confidence which the native princes of India ought to have in the juſtice and moderation of the Company's Government." Here I muſt crave leave to ſay, that the terms "improper, unwarrantable, and highly impolitic," are much too gentle as deductions from ſuch premiſes; and, as every reader of the letter will obviouſly feel as he reads the deductions which inevitably belong to them, I will add, that the ſtrict performance of ſolemn engagements on one part, followed by acts directly ſubverſive of them, and by total diſpoſſeſſion on the other, ſtamps on the perpetrators of

of the letter, the guilt of the greateſt poſſible violation of faith and juſtice.

But this, and every other concluſion from the facts adduced in proof of them will fall, if the facts themſelves have no exiſtence. I do therefore moſt poſitively and ſolemnly deny their exiſtence.

I deny that the Bengal government pledged itſelf, that the free and uncontrouled poſſeſſion of the Zemindarry of Benaris and its dependencies ſhould be confirmed and guaranteed to the Rajah and his heirs for ever.

I deny that the Bengal government pledged itſelf that no other demand ſhould be made upon him, nor any kind of authority or juriſdiction exerciſed within the dominions aſſigned him, ſo long as he adhered to the terms of his engagements.

I deny that I ever required him to keep up a body of 2000 horſe, contrary to the declaration made to him by the Governor-general and Council on the 5th of July, 1775, that there ſhould be no obligation on him to do it.

My demand, that is, the demand of the Board, was not that he ſhould maintain any ſpecific number of horſe; but that the number

which he did maintain ſhould be employed for the defence of the general State.

I deny that Rajah Cheyt Sing was bound by no other engagements to the Company, than for the payment of his tribute of Sicca rupees 22,66,180.

He was bound by the engagements of fealty, and of abſolute obedience to every order of the government which he ſerved. The various and repeated profeſſions of his letters are proofs and acknowledgments of this conſtruction of his vaſſalage; and his own cabuleeat, or the inſtrument by which he engaged to perform the duties of his Zemindarry, expreſſes it in the acknowledgment of the Company's ſovereignty.

I deny that Rajah Cheyt Sing was a native prince of India.

Cheyt Sing is the ſon of a collector of the revenue of that province, which his arts, and the misfortunes of his maſter, enabled him to convert to a permanent and hereditary poſſeſſion. This man, whom you have thus ranked amongſt the princes of India, will be aſtoniſhed, when he hears it, at an elevation ſo unlooked-for, nor leſs at the independent rights which your commands have aſſigned him; rights which are ſo foreign

foreign from his conceptions, that I doubt whether he will know in what language to aſſert them, unleſs the example which you have thought it conſiſtent with juſtice, however oppoſite to policy, to ſhew, of becoming his advocates againſt your own intereſts, ſhould inſpire any of your own ſervants to be his adviſers and inſtructors.

I forbear to detail the proofs of theſe denials. In legal propriety I might perhaps claim a diſpenſation from it, and require the charges to be proved, not myſelf diſprove them. But I have already diſproved them in my narrative of my proceedings at Benaris, which has been long ſince in your hands, and is, I hope, in the hands of the public. To that I think it ſufficient to refer, and to point out the ninth and following pages of the copy, which was printed in Calcutta, for a complete explanation; and I preſume as complete a demonſtration of the mutual relation of Rajah Cheyt Sing, the vaſſal and ſubject of the Company, and of the Company his ſovereign.

The ſubject to which I now proceed, and on which I reſt my fulleſt acquittal, is too delicate to admit of my entering upon it without

requeſting your indulgence and pardon for whatever may appear offenſive in it, and declaring, that I ſhould have ſubmitted in ſilence to the ſevereſt expreſſions of cenſure which you could paſs upon me, had they been no more than expreſſions, and applied to real facts; but, where the cenſures are not applied to real facts, and are ſuch as ſubſtantially affect my moral character, I ſhould be myſelf an accomplice in the injury, if I ſuffered the ſlighteſt imputation to remain, which it was in my power wholly to efface.

A breach of faith neceſſarily implies antecedent and exiſting engagements, and can only be conſtrued ſuch by the expreſs terms of thoſe engagements. I have been guilty of this crime in my treatment of Cheyt Sing, or of none; and I may be allowed to regret, that, while you ſtated ſuch facts as implied it, you did not in terms declare it. There is an appearance of tenderneſs in this deviation from plain conſtruction, of which, however meant, I have a right to complain, becauſe it impoſes on me the neceſſity of framing the terms of the accuſation againſt myſelf, which you have not only made, but have ſtated the leading argument to it ſo

ſtrongly,

ftrongly, that no one, who reads thefe, can avoid making it, or not know to have been intended.

But, permit me to afk, May I not prefume that this deviation arofe from fomething more than a tendernefs for my character or feelings? that it was dictated by a conciqufnefs that no fuch engagements exifted? For, if any fuch did exift, why were they not produced in fupport of the charges?

Even the facts, which are affirmed in the refolutions, are fuch as muft depend upon fome evidence, for they cannot exift independently. If the Bengal government "pledged itfelf," its pledge muft be contained in the written inftruments which were exprefsly formed, and declared to define the reciprocal relation and obligation of the Rajah and the Company.

The refolutions of your honourable Court, as they ftand unconnected in their original ftate, muft be accepted as the conclufions from certain and eftablifhed evidence; and this evidence, I muft prefume, you meant to produce in the long procefs of detailed argument which precedes them in your general letter. This confifts of pieced extracts, from opinions delivered by me in the debates of Council, which

which not only preceded the ſettlement, made with the Rajah Cheyt Sing, when his Zemindarry became the property of the Company; but, ſtrange as it will appear, which paſſed on an occaſion wholly foreign from it, and at a time when the Company had not obtained the ceſſion of the Zemindarry. At the point of the ſettlement your detail ſtops. Had it proceeded, it muſt have exhibited the conditions of the ſettlement, which would have contradicted every fact which you have aſſerted; and every man of candour will believe that this was the only reaſon why it did not proceed. For why are my ſpeculative opinions on the claim made upon the Nabob Aſſof ul Dowlah at the ceſſion of the Zemindarry of Benaris, which I thought an infringement of a treaty already ſubſiſting with him; and upon the mode by which we ſhould allow Rajah Cheyt Sing to exerciſe the management of his Zemindarry, when it had become the property of the Company, quoted in evidence againſt me; when the actual deeds which conveyed to Cheyt Sing his poſſeſſion of the Zemindarry, and all the conditions on which he held it, were the only criteria by which my conduct towards him could be tried? The de-

bates

bates from which my opinions are extracted, are ſo voluminous, and my ſhare in them bears ſo large a proportion, that it would take up much time and argument to prove, what I could prove, that in their collective and relative ſenſe they are perfectly conſiſtent, ſo far as they can apply at all to my ſubſequent conduct; but, were it otherwiſe, they were not to be made the rules of my conduct; and God forbid that every expreſſion dictated by the impulſe of preſent emergency, and unpremeditatedly uttered in the heat of party contention, ſhould impoſe upon me the obligation of a fixed principle, and be applied to every variable occaſion.

The wiſdom of the Legiſlature has declared, that the whole collective body of the Governor-general and Council ſhall be bound by the opinions of the majority; but the doctrine implied in your quotation of my opinions is the reverſe of that obligation, if my opinions were not conformable to thoſe of a majority of the Board; and, if they were, the acts of the Board, formed on ſuch concurrent opinions ought to be quoted as the rules of my conduct, not the opinions which only led to them.

Having

Having folemnly pronounced that Rajah Cheyt Sing had performed his engagements with the Company, and that my conduct towards him was "improper and unwarrantable," you proceed to fay, that "fuch farther refo-"folutions, as you may think proper to come "to on this very important fubject, will be "communicated to us by a future conveyance." This I cannot otherwife underftand than as an indication of your intention to order the reftoration of Rajah Cheyt Sing to the Zemindarry of Benaris. It will be expected, after the judgement which you have paffed, as an act of indifpenfable juftice; and, when ever this promiffory declaration is made public, as it muft be, if not already known, what may have been expected will be regarded as a certainty. If any thing were wanting but the exprefs notification of your intention to confirm it, the recall of Mr Markham, who was known to be the public agent of my own nomination at Benaris, and the re-appointment of Mr Francis Fowke by your order contained in the fame letter, would place it beyond a doubt. This order has been obeyed; and, whenever you fhall be pleafed to order the reftoration of Cheyt Sing,

I will

I will venture to promiſe the ſame ready and exact ſubmiſſion in the other members of your Council.

Of the conſequences of ſuch a policy I forbear to ſpeak. Moſt happily the wretch, whoſe hopes may be excited by the appearances in his favour, is ill-qualified to avail himſelf of them; and the force which is ſtationed in the province of Benaris is ſufficient to ſuppreſs any ſymptoms of internal ſedition: but it cannot fail to create diſtruſt and ſuſpenſe in the minds both of the rulers and of the people, and ſuch a ſtate is always productive of diſorder.

But it is not in this partial conſideration that I dread the effects of your commands. It is in your proclaimed indiſpoſition againſt the firſt executive member of your firſt government in India. It is as well known to the Indian world as to the Court of Engliſh Proprietors, that the firſt declaratory inſtruments of the diſſolution of my influence, in the year 1774, were Mr. John Briſtow and Mr. Francis Fowke. By your ancient and known conſtitution the governor has been ever held forth and underſtood to poſſeſs the oſtenſible powers of government. All the correſpondence with foreign princes is conduc-

ted in his name; and every perſon, reſident with them for the management of your political concerns, is underſtood to be more eſpecially his repreſentative, and of his choice: and ſuch ought to be the rule; for how otherwiſe can they truſt an agent nominated againſt the will of his principal; or how, knowing him to act under the variable inſtructions of a temporary influence, or the caſual dictates of a majority, can they rely on the meaſures which he may propoſe, and which a ſudden change of influence, always expected in a deviation from conſtitutional forms, may undo, and ſubject them, in every inſtance of their connection, to a continual fluctuation of affairs?

When the ſtate of this adminiſtration was ſuch as ſeemed to admit of the appointment of Mr. Briſtow to the reſidency of Lucknow, without much diminution of my own influence, I gladly ſeized the occaſion to ſhew my readineſs to ſubmit to your commands. I propoſed his nomination: he was nominated, and declared to be the agent of my own choice. Even this effect of my caution is defeated by your abſolute command for his re-appointment, independent of me, and with the ſuppoſition

that I ſhould be adverſe to it. I am now wholly deprived of my official powers, both in the Province of Owd and in the Zemindarry of Benaris.

Nor will the evil ſtop at theſe lines. My general influence, the effects of which have been happily manifeſted for the ſupport of your intereſts, is now wholly loſt, or what may remain of it ſuſtained only by the preſcription of long poſſeſſion, and ſomething perhaps of perſonal attachment, impreſſed by the habits of frequent intercourſe.

I almoſt ſhudder at the reflection of what might have have happened, had theſe denunciations, againſt your own miniſter, in favour of a man univerſally conſidered in this part of the world as juſtly attainted for his crimes, the murderer of your ſervants and ſoldiers, and the rebel to your authority, arrived two months earlier. You will learn, by our common diſpatches, what difficulties Mahdajee Sindia has had to ſurmount in reconciling the different members of the Maratta ſtate to the ratification, and even, when ratified, to the interchange of the treaty, concluded by him in May laſt, with this government. I dare to appeal even to your

judgement

judgement for the reply, and to aſk, whether the miniſters of the Peſhwa, poſſeſſing the knowledge of ſuch a circumſtance, would not have availed themſelves of it to withhold their conſent to the treaty, either claiming to include Cheit Sing as a party in it, or either overtly or ſecretly ſupporting his pretenſions, with the view of multiplying our difficulties; or, which is moſt probable, waiting for the event of that change in the ſuperior government of Bengal, which ſuch ſymptoms portended, before they precipitated their intereſts in a connection with a declining influence, which they might obviouſly conclude would render this, with all its other acts, obnoxious to that which ſucceeded it.

Their counterpart of the treaty is ratified, and in our actual poſſeſſion; and, ſuch is the character of the man whom we have made our principal and the guarantee of it, that it will inſure us againſt any change of ſentiment, which might ariſe, from any cauſe, in the breaſts of his countrymen. I am happy in having been the ſole inſtrument of the accompliſhment of ſo great an event. It originated in a ſcene of univerſal revolt encompaſſing my own perſon: it began with

with the immediate ſeparation of the firſt power of the Maratta ſtate from the general war, and was followed by the inſtant and general ceſſation of hoſtilities; in effect, by a permanent peace; for I have a right now to affirm this, having poſitively aſſured you that it would prove ſuch, while the formal confirmation of it remained ſo long in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe. In every progreſſive ſtate of it, it has met with obſtructions which might have diſcouraged even the moſt determined perſeverance; in the known indiſpoſition of the preſidency of Bombay; in the calamities of the Carnatic; in the alarming interference of the Preſident and Select Committee of Fort St. George, by the exaggerated portrait of their affairs in a letter addreſſed to our miniſter, and ſent in circulation through the midſt of Deccan and Indoſtan, intreating him at all events, and with whatever ſacrifices, to precipitate the concluſion of the treaty, and ſave them from deſtruction; but, above all, in the vehement exclamations for peace from men of every deſcription in Great-Britain. To all theſe counteractions I have oppoſed the principle of firmneſs and defiance; and, aided by the peçuliar talents, and warineſs,

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and incomparable perſeverance, of Mr. David Anderſon, I have at length brought my wiſhes and yours to their deſtined point. Perhaps with a leſs able miniſter I might yet have failed; but even the merits of his ſervices I claim as my own; for it was my choice which called his mind into action, and my confidence that gave it its beſt exertion. Padon, honourable Sirs, this digreſſive exultation. I cannot ſuppreſs the pride which I feel in this ſucceſsful atchievement of a meaſure ſo fortunate for your intereſts and the national honour; for that pride is the ſource of my zeal ſo frequently exerted in your ſupport, and never more happily than in thoſe inſtances in which I have departed from the preſcribed and beaten path of action, and aſſumed a reſponſibility which has too frequently drawn on me the moſt pointed effects of your diſpleaſure. But, however I may yield to my private feelings in thus enlarging on the ſubject, my motive in introducing it was immediately connected with its context, and was to contraſt the actual ſtate of your political affairs derived from a happier influence with that which might have attended an earlier diſſolution of it.

It is now a complete period of eleven years ſince I firſt received the nominal charge of your affairs. In the courſe of it I have invariably had to contend, not with ordinary difficulties, but ſuch as moſt unnaturally aroſe from the oppoſition of thoſe very powers from which I primarily derived my authority, and which were required for the ſupport of it. My exertions, though applied to an unvaried and conſiſtent line of action, have been occaſional and deſultory: yet I pleaſe myſelf with the hope that, in the annals of your dominion which ſhall be written after the extinction of recent prejudices, this term of its adminiſtration will appear not the leaſt conducive to the intereſt of the Company, nor the leaſt reflective of the honour of the Britiſh name; and allow me to ſuggeſt the inſtructive reflection of what good might have been done, and what evil prevented, had due ſupport been given to that adminiſtration which has performed ſuch eminent and ſubſtantial ſervices without it.

You, honourable Sirs, can atteſt the patience and temper with which I have ſubmitted to all the indignities which have been heaped upon me in this long ſervice. It was the duty of fideli-

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ty which I eſſentially owed to it; it was the return of gratitude which I owed, even with the ſacrifice of life, had that been exacted, to the Company, my original maſters and moſt indulgent patrons. To theſe principles have I devoted every private feeling, and perſevered in the violent maintenance of my office; becauſe I was conſcious that I poſſeſſed, in my integrity, and in the advantags of local knowledge, thoſe means of diſcharging the functions of it with credit to myſelf, and with advantage to my employers, which might be wanting in more ſplendid talents; and becauſe I had always a ground of hope that my long ſufferance would diſarm the prejudices of my adverſaries, or the rotation of time produce that concurrence, in the criſis of your fortune with my own, which might place me in the ſituation to which I aſpired. In the mean time there was nothing in any actual ſtate of your affairs which could diſcourage me from the proſecution of this plan. There was indeed an interval, and that of ſome duration, in which my authority was wholly deſtroyed; but another was ſubſtituted in its place, and that, though irregular, was armed with the public belief of an influence inviſibly

upholding

upholding it, which gave it a vigour ſcarce leſs effectual than that of a conſtitutional power. Beſides, your government had no external dangers to agitate, and diſcover the looſeneſs of its compoſition.

The caſe is now moſt widely different. —— While your exiſtence was threatened by wars with the moſt formidable powers of Europe, added to your Indian enemies; and while you confeſſedly owed its preſervation to the ſeaſonable and vigorous exertions of this government; you choſe that ſeaſon to annihilate its conſtitutional powers. You annihilated the influence of its executive member;——you proclaimed its annihilation; —— you virtually called on his aſſociates to withdraw their ſupport from him, and they have withdrawn it. But you have ſubſtituted no other inſtrument of rule in his ſtead, unleſs you ſuppoſe that it may exiſt, and can be effectually exerciſed, in the body of your Council at large; poſſeſſing no power of motion but an inert ſubmiſſion to the letter of your commands; which, however neceſſary in the wiſe intention of the legiſlature, have never yet been applied to the eſtabliſhment of any original plan or ſyſtem of meaſures, and ſeldom

felt but in inftances of perfonal favour or perfonal difpleafure.

Under fuch a fituation, I feel myfelf impelled, by the fame fpirit which has hitherto animated me to retain my poft againft all the attempts made to extrude me from it, to adopt the contrary line. The feafon for contention is paft. The prefent ftate of affairs is not able to bear it. I am morally certain, that my fucceffor in this government, whoever he may be, will be allowed to poffefs and exercife the neceffary powers of his ftation, with the confidence and fupport of thofe, who, by their choice of him, will be interefted in his fuccefs. I am become a burthen to the fervice; and would inftantly relieve it from the incumbrance, were I not apprehenfive of creating worfe confequences by my abrupt removal from it. Such an act would probably be confidered, by Mahdajee Sindia, as a defertion of him in the inftant of his accomplifhment of the treaty, and defeat the purpofes of it, which remain yet to be effected by his agency. I am alfo perfuaded that it would be attended with the lofs of the commander in chief, in whofe prefence alone I look for the reftoration of peace to the Carnatic, which

which he, perhaps, would think too hazardous an undertaking with no other ſupport than that of a broken government. I have now no wiſh remaining but to ſee the cloſe of this calamitous ſcene, and for that I hope a few months will be ſufficient. My ſervices may afterwards be ſafely withdrawn; but will ſtill be due, in my conception of what I owe to my firſt conſtituents, until they can be regularly ſupplied by thoſe of my appointed ſucceſſor, or until his ſucceſſion ſhall have been made known, and the interval but ſhort for his arrival.

It therefore remains to perform the duty which I had aſſigned to myſelf as the final purpoſe of this letter; to declare, as I now moſt formally do, that it is my deſire that you will be pleaſed to obtain the early nomination of a perſon to ſucceed me in the government of Fort William; to declare that it is my intention to reſign your ſervice as ſoon as I can do it without prejudice to your affairs, after the allowance of a competent time for your choice of a perſon to ſucceed me; and to declare, that if, in the intermediate time, you ſhall proceed to order the reſtoration of Rajah Cheit Sing to the Zemeendarry, from which, by the powers I legally poſſeſſed, and

conceive myſelf legally bound to aſſert, againſt any ſubſequent authority to the contrary derived from the ſame common ſource, he was diſpoſſeſſed for crimes of the greateſt enormity, and your Council ſhall reſolve to execute the order; I will inſtantly give up my ſtation and the ſervice.

To theſe declarations ſuffer me to add this reſervation: that if, in the mean time, the acts, of which I complain, ſhall, on a mature reviſion of them, be revoked, and I ſhall find myſelf poſſeſſed of ſuch a degree of your confidence as ſhall enable me to ſupport the duties of my ſtation, I will continue in it until the peace of all your poſſeſſions ſhall be reſtored, or it ſhall be your pleaſure to allow me to reſign it.

I have the honour to be,
Honourable ſirs,
Your moſt obedient
and faithful ſervant,

WARREN HASTINGS.

P. S. Upon a careful reviſal of what I have written, I fear that an expreſſion, which I have uſed reſpecting the probable conduct of the Board,

Board, in the event of orders being received for the reftoration of Cheit Sing, may be conftrued as intimating a fenfe of diffatisfaction applied to tranfactions already paft. It is not my intention to complain of any one; but to vindicate my own character, and to ftate the difficulties of my fituation. Neither do I mean, by excepting one perfon, to caft a cenfure on any others. Yet I feel, in my efteem for Mr. Wheler, and in my folicitude to avoid even the imputation of reflecting unjuftly on his conduct, a duty impelling me to declare, that, in my experience of it, fince the time that we were firft in the habits of mutual confidence, it has been fair and honourable to myfelf, and zealous to the public; equally free from profeffion and fubterfuge, and his fupport, given to me in every inftance, equal to whatever claim I might have to it.

When Mr. Haftings wrote the preceding letter, no account had been received, in Bengal, of the very honourable and effectual fupport, which ten gentlemen in the direction, and 428 proprietors, had given him, in oppofition to

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13 directors and 75 proprietors, who voted to remove him for acts which did not originate with him. The Secretary of State forbade the Directors to fend intelligence of this event to India above ten months ago, nor has it been officially tranfmitted to this moment.

Mr. Haftings has always declared, that he would not abdicate, or run away from, his government, while it was under the preffure of fo great difficulties and fuch imminent dangers; but he would continue no longer than until he faw the Company fafe, and peace and tranquillity reftored. Great progrefs was made in this defirable work when his letter was written. Tippoo Saib evacuated Arcot on the 13th of March; and, on the fame day, our troops took poffeffion of the place. He has fince entirely quitted the Carnatic. Sir Eyre Coote left Bengal, the 23d of March, with ten lacks of rupees and a reinforcement of European artillery. The Maratta peace was finally and fully fettled, and fome progrefs made in a treaty of alliance with the Marattas, which would, in its confequences, effectually deftroy the power of Tippoo Saib. The provinces of Bengal, Bahar, Benaris, and Owde, were in perfect tranquillity.

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The revenues increafing; and the falt-revenue, from a fcheme folely owing to Mr. Haftings, has increafed to fifty-feven lack of rupees per annum. Very confiderable retrenchments had been made in every branch of the public expenditure, and farther favings were about to take place. Thefe great and important fervices were performed before there was any idea, in India, of a peace in Europe; and at a time, too, when, by the tenor of the Company's letters and the parliamentary proceedings, a diffolution of the government of Bengal appeared to be near. "What might have been done, "and what evil prevented, had due fupport "been given to that adminiftration, which has "performed fuch eminent and fubftantial fer-"vices without it!"

THE END.